

For immediate release
CONTACT: Jackie Lewis
L3 Communications
L3@edc.org
0784187997

Nationwide training for new instructional materials begins

Friday, November 15, 2013

Senior mentors have been trained to support the use of new, world-class print and audio instructional materials in primary schools nationwide. The mentors, part of the Rwanda Education Board (REB)'s School-based Mentoring Program, will train mentors at the school level, who will provide support directly to head teachers, deans of studies, and teachers. The training took place from Monday to Friday this week and was facilitated by the USAID-funded Literacy, Language and Learning (L3) Initiative.

The instructional materials were developed by REB and L3 to supplement and enhance the existing curriculum and to support P1 and P2 English, Kinyarwanda, and mathematics instruction. Materials are sensitive to the Rwandan context and aim to foster a lifelong love of reading and learning. They include teachers guides, student readers, and stories for teachers to read aloud. Interactive audio programs, which are broadcasted in classrooms using simple Nokia phones and portable speakers, guide teachers and students through lively, interactive, and effective lessons.

"These materials are based on the latest research on how children learn," said Dr. Joyce Musabe, head of REB's curriculum department.

The materials emphasize key reading skills in Kinyarwanda, such as awareness of the individual sounds in words and the ability to match sounds to letters. The mathematics materials ensure that children gain problem solving and critical thinking skills. English audio programs provide both teachers and students with models of clear pronunciation from fluent speakers of the language and emphasize the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

"The learners will be able to pick some interest in English, especially with the speaking skills," said Nyaga Monica, a senior mentor in Nyabihu district.

After being piloted in 90 schools this year, the materials will be in use in all public and government-aided schools beginning in January 2014.

Mentors will play a key role in the implementation. Each of the sixty senior mentors will oversee and train about 16 school-based mentors. The school-based mentors will train teachers and deans of studies in the schools where they work, using videos and other training materials. At the training, senior mentors learned to use interactive video modules to demonstrate proper use of the materials and methods introduced by the program.

"The materials are quite an addition," said senior mentor Simon Ekwadi, who works in Nyamasheke district. "I think they are motivating."

Funded by USAID, the L3 Initiative is implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) in partnership with REB and the College of Education of the University of Rwanda and with assistance from Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO), Concern Worldwide, International Education Exchange, and the Peace Corps.

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) is a global nonprofit organization that addresses some of the world's most urgent challenges in education, health, and international development. EDC manages more than 250 projects in 30 countries. Visit www.edc.org.